

What is exciting about our bill is that for the first time we begin spending money on welfare in a way that reinforces family and work and personal responsibility, and that will make a difference for the people caught up in the system.

We take a step for the first time toward ending cash benefits at least for teen moms. We are going to give that money to the States and localities so they can take care of those moms in a way that reinforces family and work instead of destroying it.

And not only are we going to stop punishing people for working, which is what the current system does, we are going to start requiring work so that by the end of the decade about 50 percent of the people on the welfare caseload, and that is an honest number, will have to work in order to get their welfare benefits.

I am going to close, Mr. Speaker, with an observation that my friend Mr. WATTS, our distinguished colleague from Oklahoma, often makes. Under the current system we have always measured the success of welfare by how many people we could get on food stamps and AFDC and medicaid and the 70-odd other Federal welfare programs. We measured success by how many people we could get on welfare; by how much money we could spend on welfare. We need to stop doing that because welfare is not a life of dignity and hope for anybody.

We need to start measuring success, and we are going to start measuring success, by how many people we get off of welfare, off the AFDC, off of food stamps, off of medicaid, and into a life of dignity and hope and self-sufficiency which is the American dream. That is what we are offering to people.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we are going to be debating next week.

WE OWE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE REAL WELFARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. BRYANT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRYANT of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, the 104th Congress has been keeping its promises. From real crime legislation to giving much-needed reform to Federal regulations, we are indeed keeping our promises.

One of our promises to America has been to reform the welfare system. We are going to have the opportunity to change the welfare system within the next few weeks. I would like to share my thoughts with you on where welfare has been and where I would like to see it go.

For over two years, the current administration has promised to end welfare as we know it. For over two years, hard-working taxpayers have been waiting and waiting and waiting. Now, this Congress is going to begin that much-needed reform.

The current welfare system has been a tragic failure. It has encouraged dependency upon government, discouraged responsibility, and cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars.

Part of the welfare reform process involves the food stamp reform. That the food stamp delivery system must be reformed, there can be no question. Currently there is an estimated \$2 billion of fraud and abuse involved in the food stamp program annually.

The people of the 7th district of Tennessee who I represent are sick and tired of hearing about such widespread misuse of the food stamp program. They are demanding change and they deserve it.

The Food Stamp Program and Commodity Distribution Act will fight this abuse. It contains stricter penalties for food stamp trafficking, tough fines and forfeiture of ill-gotten gains. It is time we crack down harder on those who abuse food stamps and H.R. 1135 will do just that.

I have always believed that the States are better able to operate the food stamp program. After all, the States are on the frontline, much more so than we here in Washington. Pending legislation will give the States the option and the opportunity to take their food stamp funding in the form of a block grant. It is my hope that the States choose this option. It is the most effective and efficient way of reform.

Another important part of this legislation involves work requirements. It is neither right nor fair for those of us who choose to be responsible, tax-paying citizens to pay the way for someone who chooses to make no effort to be productive. So I don't think it is unreasonable to require someone to work for their benefits. H.R. 1135 does that.

Mr. Speaker, we owe the American people real welfare reform. The pending legislation will begin to provide that reform. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1135 as we begin considering it in the near future.

THE EMPLOYEE COMMUTE OPTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. MANZULLO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, the issue I want to speak about tonight involves a mandate imposed by Congress which must be enforced by the EPA. It is a plan that affects many of my constituents in the 16th congressional district of Illinois and many businesses in several cities across the country.

Many governors have called this the most unreasonable, least thought-out, least effective but very, very costly program ever proposed by the U.S. Congress. The plan, employer trip reduction, was mandated under the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990.

Let me explain what this mandate is all about. Section 182(d)(1)(B) of the

Clean Air Act requires employers of 100 or more employees in severe and extreme ozone nonattainment areas to increase passenger occupancy per vehicle in commuting trips between home and the workplace during peak travel periods by not less than 25 percent. The idea is to have people find some other mode of transportation to and from work other than using their car.

The misnomer applied to this mandate is the Employee Commute Option. Some option. If the State elects not to implement this mandate, it stands to lose some of its transportation funds. In Illinois that is \$700 million. In Pennsylvania, it is \$900 million. In some States, fines levied against businesses that do not participate may range into the thousands of dollars.

Areas across the country that face this mandate include Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Houston, Milwaukee, Los Angeles, San Diego, Ventura County and Orange County in California. Other affected States include Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, and Indiana.

The EPA, in implementing guidelines for this Employee Commute Option, suggests other options for getting to work including mass transit, jogging, bicycle riding, car pooling, and walking.

Well, in the 16th congressional district of Illinois there is a rural county, McHenry County, which is included in the Chicago consolidated statistical metropolitan area. That means residents in and around McHenry County who work in this rural area without sidewalks or mass transit system must car pool. This is a federally mandated car pooling and it is an outrage.

When the amendments of the Clean Air Act were passed in 1990, I was not a Member of this body, and to the best of my knowledge there was never any formal debate on this issue in the House; never any specific hearings on the issue before it was simply slipped in to the Clean Air Act amendments.

This past Sunday, Illinois Governor Edgar and I took the bold and courageous step of announcing a moratorium on the federally mandated employee commute option. He has directed the Illinois Department of Transportation not to enforce this measure. Why? An assistant administrator for the EPA admitted that air emissions reductions are, quote, "minuscule," and her agency has stated it simply does not intend to enforce the mandate.

This moratorium now puts Illinois in the same situation as Pennsylvania and Texas which have announced that they will not participate in enforcing the mandate. There is only one catch, Mr. Speaker: the employee trip reduction mandate is the law. The EPA may choose to not enforce it. The States may not enforce it. However, there is nothing to keep a Federal judge from enforcing it.

No, the mandate is clear. It is law. It says that businesses with over 100 employees shall participate and decrease